No.
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Passed March 17 1824
W. R. H.
Dean

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The rules of the institution make it essentially necessary that a candidate for medical honors shall compose a dissertation on some one subject, or subjects connected with medicine as a test of his abilities.

I have selected for my Inaugural Essay the Malignant fever as it prevailed in the county of Greene and Town of Greenesborough in the Summer and autumn of the year 1822. This fever made its attack principally on children and that early in the spring in the form of cholera infantum, though adults were not entirely exempt.

A grand and principal exciting cause with children was that of teething, to which cause their illness was generally attributed.

The manner in which this disease ushered itself in, was that of frequent vomiting, great irritation of the bowels, and dysentery, every species of diet

when swallowed being rejected, and it is incredible to state the immense quantities of bile vomited, the great irritation of the bowels caused continued restlessness, tossing the extremities, rolling the head from side to side, which last continued throughout the disease and had every appearance of Hydrocephalus. Tongue very much furred, at other times red and parched, breath hot and offensive, frequent and tense pulse, dry skin, hurried respiration, dull eye, though not invariably the case, at times quite a fierce look, stools frequent, very dark or green mixed with blood and mucus.

The treatment of this disease consisted in cleansing the alimentary canal and determining to the surface. The means to be used in effecting this must be evident to every practitioner. I will first commence with the use of Emetics. These were invaluable auxiliaries and promoters of relief

and should never be neglected in this fever as they too often are and that through a mistaken notion of their deleterious effect. Are not their beneficial effects produced on the system too obvious to be overlooked or neglected, for the interposition of inadequate means? They cleanse the Stomach of its crudities, determine to the surface, and leave the system in that condition, favourable for the operation of cathartics, objects, which, when obtained are grand and within themselves important.

They are not only important and necessary in the commencement of the treatment, but they also demanded the attention of the Physician in a more advanced stage (if the little patient was not too much exhausted to admit of their administration) when there was considerable tenesmus and bloody discharges. they frequently acted like a charm in diverting the action of the intestines, when all other attempts failed.

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Cathartics

These were important ingredients in that bitter cup, which somuch tends to relieve the system of a burthen it would otherwise sink under. Every person is convinced of the propriety and reason why purgatives are resorted to in fevers, it is not only to aid in reducing excessive action, by detracting a certain fluid through the medium of the exhalents of the prima viæ, but to aid nature in expelling from her offended bowels, their vitiated contents, emerged from the hepatic system and morbid secretion of the intestines. There is no one article in the materia medica so effectual in its action on the liver and bowels in Southern climates as the submuriate of mercury.

All other cathartics when given, if not rejected by vomiting, it is true will purge, but they have not the desired effect, the passages being copious and watery which exhausts the patient, not so with calomel,

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give it in broken doses (say, for a child not under ten or twelve months of age) gave from one a half to two grains, every two hours until it shall have taken six or eight, if this did not operate sufficiently, we aided its action with mild laxatives, such as vac. Epsom, Oleum Ricini or Magnesia & Rhubarb.

After the dark, green or black evacuations changed their colour to that of [illegible] (which we would decide be by administration of cathartics) we considered it as an important and favourable omen, the tongue becoming clean and moist, surface soft, countenance and eyes assuming their wonted animation and cheerfulness, the little patient was then as it were snatched from the grasp of death. Though it was often the case after having used our utmost exertions, the disease continued so obstinately intractable from the long continued and violent tenesmus, which at this stage of the malady was confined principally to the Rectum, that we were compelled to

resort to the use of injections, consisting of [illegible] laudanum. Rubbing the bowels and spine with warm laudanum was also a promoter of relief.
Being ill by the mouth led a tendency to disorder the stomach and bowels, by rendering the patient costive and exciting fever. In the treatment of this disease owing to the great irritability of the intestines, regimen demanded our particular and strict attention, for there was much to be effected, by adapting the diet to the different states of the stomach and bowels.
At particular stages of this malady every species of nutriment was tender, thus essentially necessary this being the case to take use of some absorbent, lime water or the chalk mixture. Also to apply over the epigastric region, mustard leaves steeped in gin, If those remedies should fail, we must resort to blisters or sinapisms applied over the region of the stomach and between the scapula; as the most certain means of relief to our greatest anxieties and

[illegible] sufferings. After the stomach become quiescent we gave [illegible] food.

Having gone through the description and treatment of cholera infantum, I shall now commence with the bilious Remittent or Continued fever of this autumn.

Not having the smallest idea of writing my Thesis on the malignant fever which prevailed last year until a short time since, I am not so well prepared to state the exact changes in the weather as I would otherwise have been or as I would wish to be; though, there was no striking peculiarities from that of many other years, the early part of the spring was extremely wet, frequent heavy rains continued to fall throughout April and May. In the month of June the weather was variable and a few cases of bilious fever occurred. The longest drought we had during the whole

[illegible] period during July and August we had the highest temperature during the year, that we had throughout the summer. The thermometer in the shade rose as high as 95° to 96°. We had a considerable change in the temperature of the weather in August, the thermometer sunk unusually low, the wind blowing mostly constantly from the N. E. causing a cool and damp atmosphere, which was very disagreeable particularly in the mornings and evenings, this was succeeded by unusual warm weather, fevers continued to increase throughout this month and September, becoming more malignant as the season advanced. Variable weather, but more humidity and the temperature somewhat lower in October than it was in September, not continued unusually warm for the season of the year. The whole month of November was extremely mild & temperate.

Causes of Typhus

[illegible]

The local situation of this [illegible] is and [illegible] generally is considered [illegible]. The town is very elevated, on the West there is a considerable creek, which runs through very flat and rich land one mile and a half distant, on the East immediately without the precincts there is a brook, great swamps, and vegetable matter, which from the course of nature is consequently compelled to undergo a state of putrefaction, on the South close two streams form a junction.

In the months of September and October, there were considerable floods, which are within themselves sufficient to convince every person who has the least idea of disease and its causes, of the propriety and correctness of this statement.

The [illegible] great number of

[illegible] houses, which are erected in it, are intersected [illegible] the court, all of which consists in the [illegible] of filth, and [illegible].

Mr Lempriere in his observations upon the causes of the British Army in Jamaica informs us that the town is sometimes covered with exhalations from a lagoon which lies two miles to the eastward of that town.

In fact the distance to which effluvia can be wafted is not definitely known; it depends upon prevailing winds, but it can generally be carried a much greater distance than is supposed. Some authors mention instances where it has been conveyed in strong currents of air 10 or 12 miles and even further. The marshes and ground to the South, also, [illegible] have done incurable in producing this fever.

April

[illegible]

[illegible] that is great cruel tears in have great diseases.

I cannot doubt this fact for so soon as the [illegible] was dropped its [illegible], just as soon the commence at my [illegible] often [illegible] cause morbid [illegible] placed the system in an apt situation for the reception of first exciting cause & induce disease

This is the reason why I believe fruit to be a cause. Why is fatigue viewed as a predisposing or exciting cause; why is an immoderate use of spirits or any of the depressing passions, such as fear, grief, anxiety &c.? Because they debilitate the system and leave it in that unguarded state, not able to defend itself against the attack of miasma or any other stimulus or poison.

Heat

The liver, it can [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] affected [illegible] a morbid condition [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] being principally in the [illegible] influence of heat. It is true it acts on the System generally, but its effects on the [illegible] [illegible] more evident. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] between the [illegible] depends on the [illegible] [illegible] and those of the vena portarum of the liver; a sympathy, which as far as I am acquainted, has not been noticed by any other; and which, if proved will account for the increased secretion of bile in hot climates, and lead to important practical conclusions.

If we observe those emaciated objects returning from the east and west indies, with indurated livers, sallow complexions, torpid bowels and paucity of biliary secretion, we invariably find the skin

ity, restricted may begin to be [illegible] without any thing like the [illegible] (by [illegible]) [illegible] of health, and the other evacuations may extend to [illegible] in [illegible] or having [illegible] from [illegible] bord until the appearance of [illegible].

In diabetes where perspiration is notoriously defective, there is the most decisive diminution in the [illegible] secretion.

In chlorosis Dr Hamilton observes the perspiration seems to be checked. The [illegible] says Dr Saunders (and a sea voyage contributes much) to restore the secretion of healthy bile.

The well known effect of these in determining to the surface and promoting perspiration, [illegible] and [illegible] drainage, corresponding with healthy secretion in the liver need not be insisted on. Dr Saunders further observes, that inhabitants of warm climates are extremely subject to [illegible]

arising from an increased secretion of the, and the retention of its quantity in the liver, which either by regurgitation into the stomach produces a general languor of the body together with nausea, foul tongue, loss of appetite and indigestion, or being directed to the intestines, excites a painful diarrhoea, ultimately tending to weaken their tone, and disturb their regular peristaltic motion. 1 151.

[illegible] persons, are in a profuse perspiration the application of even the slightest degree of cold is pregnant with danger, It certainly is so and on more accounts than one, for not only is the animal heat lost suddenly and rapidly abstracted, but the extreme vessels on the surface and likewise those of the vena portarum are instantly struck torpid the perspiration and biliary secretion are arrested, and a congestion throughout the portal circle is the result

All the fakirs corroborate this doctrine. I shall adduce no more examples, those already advanced afford undeniable proofs of the sympathy in question. This inhaling alone proves the manner in which heat operates in aiding or being one cause of disease.

Exciting causes

A number of the causes already cited are exciting and predisposing, I will mention those which most generally kindle the latent spark, fruit, excessive fatigue, heat, application of cold, or draught of cold water when the system was greatly heated, brought it on in some, excess in the use of spirits &c.

Symptoms

These were so extremely diversified in their features by peculiarity of constitution &c &c. and it is very difficult to give even a general outline, without involving apparent contradictions.

There were however always some prominent symptoms which as Cullen's characterised Typhus Fever, these were practical purpose, which is that the delirium. These were gastric irritability, dilation of pupil and head, Rarely could all these be absent. The pulse was generally regular and frequent, but not invariably so, the eyes inflamed and animated, pupil contracted, at other times dull and dilated. The patient without much previous notice, was suddenly seized with lassitude, giddiness and chillness, pains in the extremities, frequently in the hypochondriac and lumbar regions, with sense of debility.

Great warmth over the umbilicus, the bowels were almost always in a state of dysenteric irritation or constipated, no such thing as natural stools in this fever were ever to be seen, unless procured by art. Frequently, but not invariably, yellowness of the eyes and even of the skin took place;

the mental functions were very generally wanted, which indeed is characteristic of all bilious diseases. As this fever advanced, the symptoms often were aggravated, at this time if asked how they were, the reply would be very well (and they seemed surprised at the question, for lo! they would not complain of sickness or any local pain, but observed they were very weak and wished something to strengthen them.

I have remarked that when there was much pain (and inflammation in any one of the extremities, the disease was very intractable (and of long continuance, even if the arterial pulse and coolness of the surface were indicative of some tonic if administered, the fever would at once be revivified. This condition as well as the above mentioned particulars demanded the use of purgatives bowelling of dark or green bilious stuff

frequently commenced early (and continued a most distressing symptom, [illegible] all our attempts to relieve.

In some a [illegible] vitiated bile [illegible] perfectly dark and thick, at other times green resembling [illegible] or green leaves bruised.

I presume that the symptoms cited are sufficient for the illustration of this fever.

I shall now commence with the remedies first that of venesection, as the practitioner must rely upon his own judgement be governed by existing symptoms, and not by the anticipation of consequent debility from [illegible] illness. Dr Johnson observes that when we wish to arrest the progress of bilious fever [illegible] tie at [illegible] we should in all cases where the constitution is not broken down by climate, and particularly where determinations to the brain or liver are conspicuous

as they so often are, take one copious bleed=
ing at the commencement; the repetition must
be guided by the judgement of the practitioner
which will very effectually remove the operation
of all secondary remedial measures, (and alleviate
in a great degree, those visceral obstructions
and derangements which this fever so frequently
entails on the patient, without which it in
many cases was impossible to get purgatives to
operate. When there was pain in the head
side, conjunctiva of the eyes inflamed,
flushed, great dyspnoea, or stricture across
the breast, the use of the lancet was evident,
in order to relieve the congestement and determination
of blood to particular viscera. All of those
symptoms did not often or invariably make
their appearance in the same patient, but
when any one of them did we were compelled
to detract blood. It was

necessary when vomiting was a prominent symptom, also when after giving two or three cathartics, without their having the slightest effect, bleeding would relax the surface, that from the intimate connection existing, would relax the structure of the bowels and place the system in an apt situation for their appropriate action. When there was a determination of blood to the intestines, induced by some irritating matter, such as acrid bile &c cetera, causing bloody discharges, no one would pretend to deny its utility. The proofs of benefit from venesection in the bilious fever of all climates having so multiplied that it is needless to insist further on the propriety of this measure.

Emetics

These were important remedies in the commencement of this fever, before it had assumed its most malignant type, say in the months of June, July and August, after this the stomach was generally in too great a state of irritation to admit of their use. They cleansed the stomach more thoroughly when deemed prudent to prescribe them, than any other articles. They were mostly inadmissible in the advanced stage of fever, owing to the abnormal sensitiveness of the stomach to apparent inflammation.

Cathartics

These were found to be the most important agents in the cure of this fever, without a perseverance in their use all other attempts were futile. It was the most successful

practice after bleeding (if necessary) to administer a large dose of calomel and Jalap or calomel alone and after an interim of four or five hours to aid its operation with Jalap and Cream. Tart. or Castor Oil.

If after giving two or three cathartics and they did not have the desired effect of relieving the patient, we gave the antimonial powder, varying the proportions of its ingredients according to the symptoms. Though it was frequently the case the stomach being so extremely irritable, that we could not with any degree of propriety use this powder, owing to the tartar which it contained, we then were compelled to resort to the use of calomel alone and that given in broken doses (say from three to five grains every two hours until the patients had taken forty or fifty or it cheruted). If this portion did not operate sufficiently active, we generally aided it with mild laxatives, Sulphate of

[illegible] continued irritation, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

we atonce endeavoured to saturate the system with mercury & produce a slight ptyalism, which with a few exceptions was effected by continuing the administration of calomel in small portions, together with the inunction of mercurial ointment.

This grand point being obtained the disease once yielded; It is the "Sine qua non" in the medical treatment of this fever as well as others of a bilious character, when not yielding to the foregoing treatment. Tonics are never wanting until the Mercurial action was at end, very frequently not still. When thought adviseable to use them, we employed, Bark & Colombo combined with virginia snakeroot, hoarhound, in decoction &c.

I will once more add that I am of opinion in all intermittent or remittent fevers, the liver and spleen are more or less affected, If you would examine children to the age of twelve or fifteen living near creeks or rivers in this State

from the sea coast as far north as this which is about 32° N.L. you would find them all with enlargement of the Spleen.

This fever was in many instances of the Tertian class; the cold fit lasting from two to six hours, which seemed to threaten the life of the Patient, in several instances I have heard of its proving fatal, By giving equal parts of Laudanum and Antimonial Wine, commencing two hours previous to the accession of the paroxysm, say two teaspoonfulls at a dose, in a little warm tea and repeated every half hour, until a copious sweat was produced, never failed to stop it and gave sufficient time to purge the bowels. The Sela Arunii was sold with great success in an adjoining County. No article of the Materia Medica possessing great medicinal powers, has been more neglected than Cobweb. This has arisen from the

difficulty in procuring, in part the article genuine and also from the contradictory statements of respectable practitioners. We are directed to procure that which is the product of the black Spider, in cellars and other dark situations, and that it should be devoid of an adhesive quality. The best test for trying this article is the smell, that which is effectual possessing a peculiar nauseous, and that which is inert having little or no smell. Its operation in certain cases is evidently stimulant, producing a glow of heat over the body, which previous to its administration was cold, in other cases it had no perceptible operation. Previous to its exhibition an emetic or purge should be given. It is difficult to determine with any degree of accuracy the quantity necessary to arrest the progress of an Intermittent, having found five grains as—

effectual as thirty. It is perhaps best to follow Dr. Jacksons directions, by giving to an adult ten grains, every two hours, commencing six hours previous to the expected paroxysm. Its exhibition during the cold stage is not unfrequently attended by a complete solution of the disease.

It will be found no less useful in the bilious remittent fever, particularly where the remission is considerable and the paroxisms regular in their return, in this case its use should always be preceded by copious purging

Case 1st

J. W. was attached about the first of July with an intermittent of the quotidian type, it resisted the power of Bark alone, bark and rust of iron combined and sudorifics for six weeks

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when a dose of cob web was administerd and effectually prevented the return of fever. Case 2nd

J— S— after having ague and fever for eighteen months, was completely cured by one dose of the above named article. he had taken large quantities of bark and repeated emetics before the accession of the paroxeism, without the least abatement of the disease

I could cite a number of other cases but deem those two sufficient.

Finis